

**TOWN OF DEERFIELD  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
December 18, 2023  
MINUTES**

**Call to Order**

5:30 – Chairman Pitman called the meeting to order

**Present:** Chairman Richard Pitman, Vice Chairman Fred McGarry, Selectwoman Cynthia McHugh, Selectman Will Huebner, and Selectman Steve Barry.

**Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.**

**Dan Tripp – Deerfield Historical Society:**

Priscilla Watts. Range Road. Ms. Watts states she is at the meeting to represent Mr. Dan Tripp the Presidents of the Deerfield Historical Society. She then reads from her notes her response to the letter Mr. Tripp received from the BOS about the use of the Town Hall.

Dan Tripp. President of the Deerfield Historical Society. Nottingham Road. Mr. Tripp Bullet points the issues brought up in the letter he received from the BOS and explains each one and how they have been resolved, are being worked and how to work together.

Vice Chairman McGarry apologizes for the miscommunication and then goes over each of Mr. Tripp's bullet points and answers them.

Selectman Huebner agrees with Vice Chairman McGarry.

**Motion:** Selectman Huebner makes a motion to officially rescind the letter from the BOS to the Deerfield Historical Society.

**Second:** Chairman Pitman

**Discussion:**

**Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries**

Jim Sullivan. Wild Turkey Road. Mr. Sullivan gives his point of view on the Town Hall being closed all winter and discusses it with the Board. In the end it is confirmed that the Town Hall is closed all winter and not reopened and reheated for events throughout the winter.

Carol Levesque. North Road. Ms. Levesque discusses the cost of the heating the Town Hall with the Board and different ways the Board could cut costs elsewhere so the heat can be kept on at the Town Hall.

Erroll Rhodes. Church Street. Mr. Rhodes questions the Board about funds and heating the Town Hall.

**Alex Young – Kearsarge Energy – Battery Storage System:**

Mr. Young introduces Andrew, Kearsarge's CEO and goes over the documents (2 LOI's) he had sent to Mr. Harrington and Mr. Harrington has distributed to the Board. First LOI is for the school and the second one is for the Town Deerfield transfer station.

Chairman Pitman excuses himself and states the Board will discuss heating the Town Hall at their January 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

Mr. Young and Andrew go over a Power Point of what the business is about, what a battery storage system consists of and the financial benefits for the Town. Chairman Pitman states they will have the town's attorney review the documents and they will get back to Mr. Young as soon as that has been completed.

## **Regular Business**

### **Vouchers/Payroll Manifest/Accounts Payable Manifest:**

- Accounts Payable - \$97,041.37

**Motion:** Selectman Barry makes a motion to approve the accounts payable in the amount of \$97,041.37.

**Second:** Vice Chairman McGarry

**Discussion:**

**Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries**

- Payroll Manifest – No Payroll
- Vouchers – No Vouchers

### **Signatures/Correspondence:**

- Signatures
  - Abatement from Avatar for SNHS Management Corporation in the amount of \$6,246.00.

**Motion:** Selectman Barry makes a motion to approve the abatement form Avatar for SNHS Management Corporation in the amount of \$6,246.00.

**Second:** Vice Chairman McGarry

**Discussion:**

Selectman Huebner would like to what the abatement is based on and Chairman Pitman reads the statement from Avatar which explains that an overpayment was made by SNHS Management Corporation so an abatement is needed.

**Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries**

- Notice of intent to cut timber. Adam St. Germain. Lang Road. 25 acres to cut. (No vote needed, just signatures)
- Report of timber cut for tax collection. Michael Burke. Manchester, NH. \$450.28 to collect.

**Motion:** Selectman Barry makes a motion to approve the collection of tax dollars from Michael Burke in the amount of \$450.28.

**Second:** Vice Chairman McGarry

**Discussion:**

**Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries**

- Default Budget for the Municipality of Deerfield, NH. January 1, 2024 thru December 31, 2024. \$4,379,617.00.

**Motion:** Selectman Barry makes a motion to approve the default budget for the municipality of Deerfield, NH starting January 1, 2024 and ending December 31, 2024 in the amount of \$4,379,617.00.

**Second:** Vice Chairman McGarry

**Discussion:**

**Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries**

### **Review of Outstanding Minutes 12/11/2023:**

**Motion:** Selectman Barry makes a motion to approve the minutes from 12/11/2023 as written.

**Second:** Selectman Huebner

**Discussion:**

**Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries**

**Signatures/Correspondence:**

- Signatures
  - Bulldog Fire Apparatus Contract for the Pumper Truck build that the fire department is purchasing by using mostly grant funds. The Assistant Fire Chief, John Dubianski, is present to answer any questions the Board may have. Just a signature from the Chair is needed.

**Motion:** Selectman Barry makes a motion for Chairman Pitman to sign the contract with Bulldog Fire Apparatus for the new pumper truck.

**Second:** Selectwoman McHugh

**Discussion:**

Chairman Pitman asks Selectman Barry to add the dollar amount of \$800,433.00 to the motion so, Selectman Barry amends his motion and the second agrees with the amendment.

**Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries**

John Dubianski asks if he can go over a few things with the Board while he is here and the Board agrees to this.

1. The reoccurring warrant articles for fire/rescue. He encourages the Board to place the reoccurring warrant articles back on the warrant written as is. He feels that warrant articles are the will of the voters and help the people prioritize what they want for the town. He then provides stats showing the community has always supported these warrant articles strongly and goes over the work that needs to be done apparatuses next year so the funds are needed.  
Selectwoman McHugh asks about not having any fire/rescue warrant articles a few years ago and then her and Mr. Dubianski go over this and Selectwoman McHugh reiterates why the Board made the decisions they did with the warrant articles.  
Selectman Huebner goes over the balance form this year and feels it should cover unexpected expenses for next year so the additional funds are not needed.  
Selectman Barry states he feels they are important funds but they should not be funded this year.

**Motion:** Vice Chairman McGarry makes a motion to put article 8, Fire Apparatus and Equipment Capital Reserve Fund; article 12, Fire Department Vehicle and Equipment Expendable Trust Fund; and article 13, Rescue Vehicle Equipment Capital Reserve Fund back on the warrant.

**Second:** No Second

**Discussion:**

**Vote: Yea 0, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Fails**

2. New Warrant Articles. Copies were provided to the Board.
  - To see if the town will raise and appropriate the sum of Thirty-Five Thousand, Eight Hundred Eighty Dollars (\$35,880.00) for additional part-time Fire Fighter / EMT hours in the Deerfield Fire/Rescue Department. Should this article pass, it would only be funded in the event that the 2023 Operating Budget fails to pass. This request has been supported by the BOS and MBC during the municipal budgeting process. Looking to have fall back in the event the budget were to fail again this year.  
Mr. Dubianski explains why they are asking to have this on the warrant and explains its purpose. He also provides some statistics showing why this article is a good idea. He then goes the stats with Selectman Huebner and goes over the cost. Mr. Dubianski reiterates that this in the current budget so if the budget passes this article will be null and void.

**Motion:** Selectman Barry makes a motion to add the article presented, "To see if the town will raise and appropriate the sum of Thirty-Five Thousand, Eight Hundred Eighty Dollars (\$35,880.00) for additional part-time Fire Fighter / EMT hours in the Deerfield Fire/Rescue Department. Should this article pass, it would only be funded in the event that the 2023 Operating Budget fails to pass. This request has been supported by the BOS and MBC during the municipal budgeting process. Looking to have fall back in the event the budget were to fail again this year," to the warrant.

**Second:** Vice Chairman McGarry

**Discussion:**

**Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries**

- To see if the town will raise and appropriate the sum of One Dollar (\$1.00) to be added to the following lines in the Deerfield Fire/Rescue Department operating budget. Should this article pass, it would only be funded in the event the 2023 Operating Budget fails to pass. The budget lines to be funded are: 01.4220.04.110 – Full Time, 01.4220.04.140 Overtime, 01.4220.04.XXX Retirement. This request to add a single dollar in these lines was supported by both the BOS and MBC during the municipal budgeting process. Mr. Dubianski explains why they would like to have this added to the warrant. Selectman Huebner questions even putting this on the article.

**Motion:** Vice Chairman McGarry makes a motion to put the article, To see if the town will raise and appropriate the sum of One Dollar (\$1.00) to be added to the following lines in the Deerfield Fire/Rescue Department operating budget. Should this article pass, it would only be funded in the event the 2023 Operating Budget fails to pass. The budget lines to be funded are: 01.4220.04.110 – Full Time, 01.4220.04.140 Overtime, 01.4220.04.XXX Retirement. This request to add a single dollar in these lines was supported by both the BOS and MBC during the municipal budgeting process," on the warrant.

**Second:** Selectman Barry

**Discussion:**

**Vote: Yea 2, Nay 3, Abstained 0 - Motion Fails**

- To see if the town will raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Twenty-Four Thousand Eight Hundred Dollars (\$124,800) to be added to the Deerfield Fire/Rescue Part-Time Employee Line (01.4220.04.111) for funding Night and Weekend Coverage. These funds would be used towards a new program establishing scheduled night and weekend coverage for the department. Mr. Dubianski explains why this is different than the first article he presented and why they would to have this on the warrant. Chairman Pitman asks they came up with the dollar figure and Mr. Dubianski explains that it is based on the stipend rate in 6 hour blocks and explains how that would work. Selectwoman McHugh asks what is budgeted for stipend pay right now and Mr. Dubianski states, he is not sure as he does not have that number with him. They then go over what the grant covers for hiring and getting people equipped to train but it doesn't help the Town pay them once they are ready to work. Mr. Harrington states that the current budget for part time fire/rescue employees is \$155,094.00 and what the stipends for the volunteers comes out of as well. There is approximately \$31,542.00 left until the end of the year. Vice Chairman McGarry clarifies that this article would require volunteers who sign up for the 6-hour block to be ready to respond to calls during this block.

Selectwoman McHugh would like to know for sure who this applies to, single certified or dual certified or both and Mr. Dubianski is not 100% sure as it was the chief that wrote these. Selectman Huebner wonders if this is worth putting on the warrant since the citizens are concerned with the raised tax rate and then asks Selectman Barry his opinion. Selectman Barry believes it's a great idea but is opposed to it for this warrant. In the end the Board decided not to add this to the article.

- Informational Only. To see if the Town of Deerfield supports the Deerfield Fire/Rescue Department and the Board of Selectman in pursuit of transitioning away from a Non-Transport EMS Service to a Transporting EMS Service and obtaining Deerfield own Ambulance.  
Mr. Dubianski explains this article and states they are not looking to buy an ambulance but to gauge the public on whether they are ready for the Town to buy one.

**Motion:** Selectman Barry makes a motion to add the article, "Informational Only. To see if the Town of Deerfield supports the Deerfield Fire/Rescue Department and the Board of Selectman in pursuit of transitioning away from a Non-Transport EMS Service to a Transporting EMS Service and obtaining Deerfield own Ambulance," to the warrant.

**Second:** Vice Chairman McGarry

**Discussion:**

Vice Chairman McGarry believes they should make the public aware that it could take up to 5 years to get an ambulance and get fully up and running whether in the article or elsewhere.

Mr. Dubianski agrees it would take time but with Rescue one being more than 20 years old, it's time to start looking into options for replacing it and this article gauges whether it should be an ambulance or another fly car.

Selectman Huebner feels it is risky to put this on warrant and Mr. Dubianski disagrees and explains why.

The Board and Mr. Dubianski agree to change the wording to advisory rather informational.

**Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries**

#### **Unfinished Business/New Business/Other Business**

- Unfinished Business
  - 2024 Warrant Articles
    - ♦ Phil Bilodeau. Cemetery Committee. Mr. Bilodeau reminds the Board that they cut the cemetery budget during the budget meeting and but would make up the cut funds with a warrant article for \$70,000.00. Now the Board is not supporting warrant articles so Mr. Bilodeau states he is pleading for them to reconsider adding the cemetery article for \$70,000.00.

**Motion:** Selectman Huebner makes a motion to add the cemetery article back on the warrant with a dollar amount of \$70,000.00.

**Second:** Selectwoman McHugh

**Discussion:**

**Vote: Yea 4, Nay 1, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries**

- ♦ Conflict of Interest Ordinance to be added to the warrant.

**Motion:** Selectman Barry make a motion to approve the addition of the Conflict-of-Interest Ordinance article to the warrant.

**Second:** Selectwoman McHugh  
**Discussion:**

**Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries**

Selectman Barry reads the Conflict-of-interest Ordinance article.

- New Business
  - Library. Anne Meyers. Library Director. Ms. Meyer's goes over all the work that will be occurring at the prior to the end of the year. Per the MOU the library trustees have already approved this work to be done and Ms. Meyers wanted to make the Board aware of and they all agree it sounds good.
- Unfinished Business
  - 2024 Warrant Articles
    - ♦ Serita Frey. Conservation Commission Chair. Ms. Frey discusses the article that reduces the Land Use Change Tax to 50/50, 50% to the Town and 50% to the Conservation Commission. Currently 100% is going to the Conservation Commission. She then goes over hoe the increased funds are helpful to the commission and the commission does not feel it is far to the community that just voted last year to make it 100% to ask them to revert it back. They are asking for this article to be removed from the warrant. Selectman Huebner feels they should leave it on the warrant because if it passes then they know for sure that the people really want it and Ms. Frey does not agree with this especially since this is not how other articles work.

**Motion:** Vice Chairman McGarry makes a motion to strike this article, Reduce Land Use Change Tax from 100% going to the Conservation Commission to 50/50, 50% to the Town and 50% to the Conservation Commission, from the warrant.

**Second:** Chairman Pitman

**Discussion:**

Selectman Huebner would like to leave it on the article for the people to reaffirm they want 100%.

Vice Chairman McGarry reminds the Board that the voters just voted this year to go to 100% so it seems strange to ask them to vote on it again and Selectwoman McHugh disagrees with it being strange due to the tax increase this year.

Selectman Barry feels this is a way of finding revenue in other ways and feels the 50% is fair.

The Board, Ms. Frey, and Erroll Rhodes discuss the article further and then move on to the vote.

**Vote: Yea 2, Nay 3, Abstained 0 – Motion Fails**

- ♦ Rescind SB2 and go back to Town Meetings.

Selectman Huebner does not agree with this article and would like removed from the warrant. He then asks, since it passed by such a large margin, he does not feel it needs to be revoted on.

Selectman Barry expresses his feelings on why this should remain on the warrant and why the Town would benefit from this.

Vice Chairman McGarry brings up when a citizen at one of the previous meetings commented on having a town meeting.

Selectman Huebner asks the Board to reconsider and to strike this from the warrant. It is not brought back to vote on again so this will remain on the warrant.

### **Signatures/Correspondence:**

- Correspondence – Chairman Pitman states the Board received 2 letters about the yield sign at the intersection Parade Road and Nottingham Road. The letters are requesting to have the yield sign removed and a stop sign put in. The Police Chief provided his response and Vice Chairman McGarry reads it for the minutes.

“It was brought to my attention that the Town Administrator received correspondence from a citizen requesting the yield sign at the end of Parade Road going on to Nottingham Road be changed to a stop sign. I later learned that this request was brought forward in response to a Facebook conversation where someone other than the requesting citizen apparently had a near death experience as someone had apparently run the yield sign. I should mention that this incident was never reported to the police department.

Years ago, this situation of people failing to yield had come up. At the time there was a faded, barely legible yield sign placed in a manner that made it difficult to determine if it applied to traffic on Parade Road or Nottingham Road. In response, new, more visible signage was purchased. It was also placed further back away from the corner to make it clear that it applied to traffic on Parade Road. There was also another sign placed well before the actual yield sign to warn drivers that it was coming up.

I do not believe decisions should be based on Facebook fodder and individual requests, but instead based on facts. I will tell you that we have not received any complaints, and there has not been any motor vehicle accidents at this particular intersection. With that being said, my recommendation is to leave the signage as is. There is no data to justify changing to a stop sign, which I can assure you would be violated as well.

I acknowledge that the laws and rules of the road are by no means followed 100% of the time, whether intentionally or accidentally. There will always be traffic infractions. We cannot prevent this, nor is it reasonable to think that we can. We aggressively enforce traffic in Deerfield but, we cannot always be in the right place at the right time.

Again, it is my recommendation that the signage in place remain as it currently is.”

### **Unfinished Business/New Business/Other Business**

- Unfinished Business
  - 2024 Warrant Articles
    - ♦ COLA 3.2%. Chairman Pitman reminds the Board they had voted yet but they did not have the dollar figure. Mr. Harrington provides the number, \$67,826.00. Chairman Pitman states he feels they should revote now that they have the figure.  
Selectman Barry states he feels it's well deserved but does not want it on the warrant because he can't justify spending any money this year due to the tax increase.

**Motion:** Vice Chairman McGarry makes a motion to reaffirm the vote the Board had taken with regard to providing a cost-of-living adjustment for town employees at the rate of 3.2% which amounts to a total effect of \$67,826.00.

**Second:** Selectwoman McHugh

#### **Discussion:**

Selectman Huebner reminds the Board COLA was 5% last year and this is 3.2% but asks if it might not be good idea due to the current situation. He feels they should defer this to a salary administration and not balloon the salaries with COLA.

Vice Chairman McGarry explains what COLA is and states merit should be separate. Selectman Huebner questions if the general community receives anything like this to keep up with the cost-of-living and asks if the town employees should lose buying power like the community has. He goes on to speak about minimum wage citizens suffering from inflation without being compensated for it and does the employer need to bear all the burden of inflation or does the worker also bear some of that.

**Vote: Yea 3, Nay 2, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries**

**Town Administrator's Report**

Mr. Harrington states he has nothing to share this evening.

**Unfinished Business/New Business/Other Business**

- Other Business
  - Vice Chairman McGarry brings up a letter received from FEMA with regard to their flood insurance maps. He explains that there will be a warrant article on zoning to address the changes in the flood insurance maps that were recommended by the State.

**Signatures/Correspondence:**

- Correspondence
  - Chairman Pitman states they received a letter from the police chief regarding the wage scale and he summarizes the letter stating the Chief is requesting a \$5,000.00 a year raise to bring his salary in line with other departments.  
Selectman Huebner states that himself and Selectwoman McHugh did some research themselves and determined he does not need a raise.  
Selectman Barry states he spoke with the Chief and told the chief they do not have the money to provide a raise.  
Selectman Huebner states he would not be in favor of granting that raise.  
Selectman Barry states there are other employees deserve raises as well but there are no funds for raises. He then states that he felt the Chief understood a raise was not possible.  
The Board agrees to respond to the letter with a letter with the Board's response.

**Non-Public Session**

**Citizen's Comments**

- Joel Hughes. Harvey Road. Mr. Hughes provides his opinion on the yield sign brought up in the letter at the intersection of Parade Road and Nottingham Road and provides his idea of what to do if it's decided a stop sign is needed.
- Davis Brush. Birch Road. Conservation Commission. Mr. Brush provides his opinion on the article being presented on the warrant about the land use change tax.
- Kevin Verville. McCarron Road. Mr. Verville provides his opinion on the SB2 article. He then provides his opinion on the budget. Lastly, he provides his opinion how to do warrant articles and the budget.
- Harriet Cady. Ms. Cady brings up her previous question of having the Board hire a company to come in and see how much actual buildable land there is in Deerfield and then she provides her opinion on the topic. Lastly, she provides her opinion on SB2.

**Adjournment**

**Motion:** Selectman Barry makes a motion to adjourn.

**Second:** Vice Chairman McGarry

**Discussion:**

**Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries**



**Next Meeting: January 2, 2024 at 5:30 pm**

*The Minutes were transcribed and respectfully submitted by Randi Long, Recording Secretary  
Pending approval by the Board of Selectmen*